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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

16 JUL 1976

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MEMORANDUM FOR: George J. Keegan, Jr.
Major General, USAF
Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence

SUBJECT : Experiment in Competitive Analysis

1. I understand the concern expressed in your 2 July memorandum, both concerning the absence of the Soviet ASW threat from consideration in the experiment and the risks of forwarding to policymakers two analyses on identical issues of possibly widely varying quality.

2. On the first point, inclusion of the Soviet ASW threat for "B" team analysis was given serious consideration and set aside only with the greatest reluctance, for a number of reasons. There are, for example, highly complicated methodological and data problems, and it would be difficult for any newly constituted "B" team to catch-up to the level of expertise in the Community in time for it to effectively compete with the "A" team. The Estimates Evaluation Committee of PFIAB was consulted and concurred in the decision to exclude SSBN vulnerability from this first experiment. Admittedly, some balance is missing, but in view of the balanced discussion of each leg of the TRIAD that will be included in the basic estimate, I fail to see how any implication of Intelligence Community advocacy can legitimately be raised.

3. Your concern over the possibility that "B" team analyses on Soviet ICBM accuracy will not measure up to the quality standards set by the NIE -- yet will still be forwarded to selected policymakers -- is one which has also been voiced within CIA. But I hesitate to prejudge the outcome to that extent. The competing analyses must ultimately stand or fall on their own merit and I am sure that substantial differences in the quality of the work will be so perceived by the policymaker. In any event, a fair trial of the thesis that the Community is complacent in its assessment of Soviet ICBM accuracy will certainly require the direct participation of the principal proponents of that thesis.

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4. In short, while I don't question the validity of the points you raise, I would ask that you bear in mind that this exercise is -- above all -- an initial experiment in a technique for presenting the policymaker with the information he needs to make decisions. My agreement with Leo Cherne and Brent Scowcroft is that a full joint review of the exercise will be conducted when this year's estimate is completed. Both the utility and validity of the results will then be addressed.

/s/ George Bush

George Bush
Director

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